Publishing of bilingual editions of foreign newspapers

3954. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to allow printing/publishing of English and Hindi editions of various foreign newspapers in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is a proposal under active consideration of the Government of hold any discussions and other groups concerned before taking any final decision on it; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) The Cabinet decision of 13th September 1955 stipulated that no foreign owned newspapers should be published in India and also that foreign newspapers dealing mainly with the news and current affairs should not be allowed to bring out Indian editions. Till date, this decision has not been changed or reviewed.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) However, the Government is open to discussion on this issue with all stakeholders.

Opening up of broadcast sector

3955. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has released a consultation paper on opening up of the broadcast sector so as to increase its reach;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any plan to open up this sector for State Governments, Government-owned enterprises, local bodies, etc; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) and (b) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has released a consultation paper on 25.02.2008 on the issue of permitting State Government, urban and local bodies, 3 tier Panchayat Raj bodies, publicly funded bodies, political parties and Religious bodies to enter into broadcasting activities which may include starting of broadcast channels and entering into distribution platform like cable services, seeking comments of the stakeholders by 28.3.2008. The details of consultation Note are available at website to TRAI (*www.trai.gov.in*)

(c) Government has sought the recommendation of TRAI on permitting State Governments, Government-owned enterprises, local bodies etc. The recommendations are awaited from TRAI.

(d) Does not arise